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ABSTRACT

At an institute at the University of Oklahoma, some 85 people from Arkansas, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma discussed ways to improve cross-cultural and user developed library services to all types of disadvantaged persons. The participants were librarians and representatives of the minorities, the culturally different, and the poor. Following a factual presentation of economic and educational statistics for the six-state area, panel and group discussions were held. Blocks of time were devoted to meetings of groups by state, in which action plans were drawn up. Also discussed were regional interstate services which might assist the states and the American Library Association Office of Library Service to the Disadvantaged in achieving improved service nationwide. While it was felt that many technical aspects of the institute could have been improved, the program proved strong in the communication among participants, in its consortium-type sponsorship, and in its articulated structure which took into account the fact of local, state, regional, and national complementary responsibility. (Author/SL)

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NARRATIVE EVALUATION REPORT ON THE INSTITUTE FOR

STRENGTHENING LIBRARIANS' CAPABILITY TO ELICIT AND RESPOND TO THE FELT NEEDS OF MINORITY/CULTURALLY ISOLATED/DISADVANTAGED PERSONS AND GROUPS IN THE SOUTHWEST

A Pilot Institute at the Continuing Education Center at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

October 4 - 8,1972

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IR 001 173

II. Introduction

Strengthening Librarians' Capability to Elicit and Respond to the Felt Needs of Minority/Culturally Isolated/Disadvantaged Persons and Groups in the Southwest was the subject of a five day Institute on the campus of the University of Oklahoma, October 4 - 8, 1972. Working with a grant from the U. S. Office of Education under the Higher Education Act, Title II b(1965), the sponsors of the Institute were the Oklahoma University School of Library Science; the Southwest Library Interstate Cooperative Endeavor(SLICE - a project of the Southwestern Library Association); The National Book Committee; The American Library Association's Office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged. Virginia H. Mathews of the National Book Committee was Director of the Institute; Lee Brawner, President of the Southwestern Library Association, and Dr. Frank Bertalan, of the School of Library Science at the University, were Associate Directors.

Three planning meetings were held with members of an Advisory Committee to the Institute which included representatives of all the sponsoring groups. Two were held in Oklahoma City, and the third during the annual conference of the American Library Association in Chicago.

Some sixty (60) applications to participate in the Institute were received from the six Southwestern states, in response to about two hundred (200) invitations to apply, sent to school, college and public librarians with planning, supervisory and training responsibility at the State level in Arkansas, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. About forty (40) librarians were selected.

Eighty five (85) people altogether participated in the Institute. This number was almost equally divided between librarians and the resource participants or consultants who came to work with them. These resource participants, representing the minority, culturally

different and poor, were carefully selected from a wide range of occupations and backgrounds and included leaders in National Welfare Rights Organizations from the region; a Home Start Visitor on the Navaho Reservation; the Principal of an Indian Reservation School; a Director of prison education; a field worker for a migrant council; and a Chicano professor of communications from a community college.

For the purposes of the Institute, the term disadvantaged was defined as follows:

Persons who have educational, socio-economic, cultural or other disadvantages that prevent them from receiving the benefits of library service designed for persons without such disadvantages and who for that reason require specially designed library services. Additionally, persons whose need for such special services results from poverty, neglect, delinquency or cultural or linguistic differences or isolation from the community at large. Of particular concern in this Institute were the urban and rural poor; the geographically isolated; the unemployed and under-employed; the aged and the very young; the functionally illiterate and poorly educated; and the Black, Indian, Spanish-speaking and other populations. In the six states on the Southwest region on which the Institute focussed, approximately forty(40%) to sixty(60%) percent of the total population would qualify as disadvantaged according to this definition.

The goals of the Institute were:

1. to stimulate planning and action on a regional pilot basis for cross-cultural and user-developed services to all types of disadvantaged persons;
2. to strengthen the role of the regional library association in providing a prototype for continuing in-service training programs for librarians which can be adapted through SLICE to local needs

in the six states of the region;

3. to develop a model which might be replicated by other regions, states and localities for eliciting perceptions of need and present adequacy of libraries in meeting needs from spokesmen of various disadvantaged user groups;

4. to provide some initial guidance to the ALA Office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged as to how it can best operate to support local and regional efforts and integrate a national effort with them for a cohesive whole, and especially its role in consultant services.

Dr. Ralph W. Conant, President of the Southwest Center for Urban Research in Houston, was the keynote speaker who laid out for the participants the broad background against which they would work together. He defined types of disadvantagement found among people in the Southwest region. His talk was followed by a factual survey of economic and educational statistics in the six state area, prepared especially for the Institute by Linda Ann Levy of the Oklahoma County Libraries staff under the guidance of Lee Brawner and SLICE office director, Mary Ann Duggan. Next, Janice Kee, Library Program Officer for USOE/DHEW Region VI, reviewed plans for long-range state programs for library services to the disadvantaged recently prepared by each of the SWLA region state agencies.

Against this background information the participants, in panel and group discussions, talked about the concerns and problems of the disadvantaged as they understood them, and how libraries might more fully contribute to the meeting of various needs. Two areas of concern with special significance for disadvantaged people were emphasized during the program of the Institute: early childhood learning and career education for youth. Case histories of innovative and experimental library service programs in Dallas, Albuquerque, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Houston were reviewed

and discussed. Burton Lamkin, Associate Commissioner of Education and head of the Bureau of Libraries and Learning Resources, spoke with the group of his concern that traditional library systems and services were not adequately serving the poor, or even the middle class for whom they were designed. He pressed for more inter-agency and inter-disciplinary combinations of expertise; new types of library service delivery; and the stimulation of creative action at the state and regional level.

Several blocks of time during the Institute days were devoted to meetings of participants by states, to develop in state groups some experience in exchange of views and ideas between the librarians and the resource persons. Toward the end of the Institute, these small group sessions were used by the state groups to lay plans for further action within their states.

III. Evaluation

Relationships with the U. S. Office of Education on all program and fiscal matters proceeded smoothly and routinely. Janice Kee, as Regional Program Officer for five of the six states involved was continuously active in the planning stages of the Institute as well as during the whole of the Institute itself.

Division of responsibility among members of the consortium which sponsored the Institute was well worked out, and working relationships excellent. The administration of the University was cooperative; Dr. Bertalan and his department took responsibility for housing and meeting arrangements, fiscal matters and last minute processing of some materials on site. Mary Ann Duggan and Lee Brawner, on behalf of SLICE handled invitations, the processing of applications, and work-up of factual material about the region. In addition, the Oklahoma County Libraries and the Oklahoma State Library provided splendid back up wherever and whenever needed, during both the planning and the Institute period. Staff help for the

transportation and registration periods; location and provision of equipment and the arrangements for recording and documentation; arrangements and hospitality for the two planning sessions held in Oklahoma City were only a few of the major jobs done with good timing, good humor and efficiency. Miss Mathews, on behalf of both the National Book Committee and the ALA Office for Library Service to the Disadvantaged, organized the program elements, identified and invited resource persons and speakers, prepared bibliographies and other "kit" materials, and provided general coordination of efforts.

Pre-Institute preparation presented few problems. The selection criteria were well spelled out and invitations were issued to all eligible librarians, so that widespread knowledge about the Institute helped in recruitment of librarian participants, and there were enough applicants from among whom to choose those who could benefit from and contribute to the Institute discussions. Selection of librarian applicants was accomplished at the third meeting of the advisory committee. Identification of resource participants was more difficult, requiring much contact with agencies, patience in following up leads, and tolerance for disappointments. Full and careful explanations and some persuasion were needed more often than not to get to the Institute people who did not know very much, on the whole,about libraries or see them as centrally important. Some last minute "drop-outs" upset the balance between librarians and resource participants in some states, but on the whole the effort was extremely successful.

The orientation of participants could have been improved upon. It would have been desirable to have been able to distribute all of the background materials to participants before their arrival at Norman. This was not done because the material was not completed in time for mailing. Also, the time frame of the Institute was such

that there was no opportunity for an "ice-breaker" or other get-acquainted function before the substantive start of the Institute. This would have been helpful for mixing and mingling the librarians with the resource participants right from the start, but the level of the people in both groups was such that the lack of it was not much felt, and quickly overcome. Everyone worked at overcoming self-consciousness and developing communications.

The quality of the physical facilities was mixed. Accoustics in the main, large meeting room at the Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education were poor, and some presentations could not be heard without strain. Sleeping rooms in the Walker Tower were noisy at night, due to the proximity of other groups, and obtaining such basics as towels presented a problem for some participants. On the positive side, participants could all eat together, and the food was good and inexpensive, and the dining areas convenient. The staff at the Center was helpful, and seemed interested in the success of the Institute.

There was good communication between participants and the staff as well as a certain esprit de corps among the participants unusual for such a short time together and the great diversity of background. The librarians were pleased to have the rather unusual and intensive experience presented by the Institute; the resource participants were pleased to have been sought out and "found" and somewhat surprised that the librarians felt the need to consult with them. The Hispanic librarians and resource people got on well together, but isolated themselves somewhat from the rest of the group. This situation was aided by the fact that one of the staff members speaks Spanish and is married to a Latin. Aware by the second day that the Hispanic participants thought that too much attention was being paid to the problems of Blacks, the staff attempted to achieve some balance through assignment of leadership roles in discussion groups

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and in other ways. Members of the staff were constantly available to participants throughout the Institute, scattering to various tables at meal times, involved in after hour rap sessions, etc.

No regular faculty of the School of Library Science, with the exception of Dr. Bertalan,were involved in the Institute. Most of the program lecturers and consultants remained throughout and participated fully. Their contributions were "on target" and effective in varying degrees. Dr. Ralph Conant's talk was unanimously evaluated by participants as valuable and thought-provoking, while that of another consultant, Phillip Swartz, speaker on career education, was voted "deadly dull" by most of them. The contributions of Ed Miller of the Houston Public Library's Community Outreach Program, John Hinkle of the Oklahoma State Department of Libraries, and Valenta Jones of the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation and Institutional Services were especially cited for their excellence. On the other hand, Mrs. Driggins, as moderator of the "rap session" with a group of Street Academy young people was roundly criticised by librarians and resource participants alike for her manner with the teen agers; all the same, several felt that they learned something about what not to do from watching her and listening to her.

Without question the most unique feature of this Institute was the opportunity it provided for librarian leaders to listen to, and get acquainted with, the self-perceived needs of poor, minority and culturally isolated or different people and groups. Typical quotes from both the librarian and resource participant evaluations bear this out:

"It made me more aware of the richness and variety of the various cultures."

"I was surprised by the obvious gap between certain user groups and librarians that came out in the discussions."

"I heard first hand, for the first time, speakers from the Welfare

Rights Organization...very revealing. Their message was clear and eloquent...the workshop might have been called a masterful, well-directed program for developing human relations. It was a self-renewal for me personally..."

"Needs were brought out by resource people that I had never really thought of."

"User group resource people were <u>great</u>. Made me more aware of myself: am I sincere in wanting to serve the disadvantaged? Can I communicate with them so I won't lose them in the process?"

"The resource people had a tremendous impact on me and my concept of the kinds of services we should be offering to our minority clientele."

"The resource people gave reality to situations."

"Got the feeling that perhaps I could, indeed, become more sensitive to the needs of people from a different culture. It makes me realize that I, too, am different(first time I'd ever been called an "anglo")"

"A mind-blowing experience - it will take some time for me to sort it out."

"The most significant thing were the talks with the resource people. Entirely new idea about the means of approach to these groups."

"Moved past the awareness stage into a more concentrated action environment."

"I think libraries are important to us now - I didn't before."

"I was made aware of needs in a very personal way..."

"The resource people had a tremendous impact on me..."

"Really did help to have people to talk to that could answer small matters and clarify points... the people selected were excellent choices, easy to talk to."

"I was surprised at the help that libraries could be to the poor... In future I will be more tolerant of librarians and encourage the

community agencies to use them."

The great variety of people - types, personalities - brought together in such close companionship was in itself a stimulating learning experience. Most of the librarians seemed to understand and accept the fact that disadvantaged people can be encouraged and aided to express their needs for material and services in terms of their life situations and perhaps even their goals, but they cannot be expected to prescribe exactly what they need and how they are to get it. That must be the professional job of the librarian, and one librarian participant at least missed this important point according to the comment in the evaluation: "Some of the resource people spent too much time telling us their personal problems and never did get around to what libraries and librarians could do to help them."

Action recommendations for follow up of the Institute were of two kinds: those of individuals, written in their evaluations, which indicated personal action to be taken; and those formally adopted by the state groups for action. Parallel lines of priority were evident, as between librarian and non-librarian: one aimed at the library profession, and the other at the community; but the librarians had something to say about what the public should do, as well as what the profession should do, and vice-versa. Here are some comments:

From Resource People

"Proper roles for librarians should be better defined."

"A follow up questionnaire to all participants to find out how many of the librarians here actually used any of the ideas they picked up here."

"Find more librarians dedicated to people and the circumstances they live in... Use senior citizens, both black and white, from poor neighborhoods for home start programs..."

"See to our library, that it get more books to poor...volunteers to help mothers in home to get small children ready for school...our organization(Welfare Rights) check on Mayor to be sure library is getting money it supposed to get..."

"If the poor people are not asked about materials that are put in the library, it's too late to ask them later...need people from the

library to get community people together and explain what the library could do, because poor people don't understand the use of the library."

"A lot of librarians don't know what programs(money) there is to help them do for people..."

"Build the concept that libraries are a social service agency and the staff the center of activities and information, training, recreation...Before this, libraries always seemed to be for only a select group; on the Reservation, mainly professional people,Indian and non-Indian. We will assess how much libraries are used, and then find out how to make them more useful...We need written guidelines, ideas and recommendations about what we can do in our jobs to relate to and use library services...We must explain libraries to the Indian community...get a collection of Indian books and other materials...This Institute has opened doors to ideas about involving people in library projects..."

"Better communication with all agencies may be one solution... I recommend that libraries become a better source of practical information about Federal programs, services...free booklets and hand-outs to be given away...advisory councils of community people, including young ones, who could recommend books and programs that people they know, need..."

"Resource people here should begin to ask questions to the libraries and make personal contacts...poor people shouldn't be asked to volunteer; they should be paid. We have worked long enough for nothing. We won't get anywhere until poor people have more say about programs set up to help them."

From Librarians

"I'd like to see more discussion about the role of the library schools in preparing librarians for their responsibility to the disadvantaged...Major follow up for librarians is to become more involved in the survival issues that are the major concern of the disadvantaged...not just physical survival, but cultural survival. Librarians should learn to help target groups to maintain a balance between factors that will help maintain cultural identity while preparing them to compete in the total society...State, regional and national organizations can work for legislation for providing service to the disadvantaged; information programs; motivation for librarians and community leaders; qualitative and quantitative standards and research that will isolate success factors and measure progress...Jan Kee's comments and cautions about involving the total community in promoting library service to the disadvantaged, and making these programs part of the total program were especially important."

"Librarians must accept the real need to involve grassroots users in planning...also the need for agency pooling(staff, materials, quarters, etc.")

"Must have grassroots meetings with poor...local planning meetings with other agencies...look closely at representation of poor and minority people on library boards..."

"Prepared packages on programs for the disadvantaged..."

"Need a mini Institute for our state with local Institutes as spin-offs."

"Try to improve the attitudes of all library employees. We have to change the order of priorities, and this is the main idea that must be got across to librarians, paraprofessionals, trustees."

"Specific programs must be designed to meet the needs of ethnic minorities..."

"No one plan of action can cover all the groups...must be targeted at preschool, teen-agers, etc."

"Use of audio-visual material and concerned, flexible staff; non-discriminatory practices; better training for aides and volunteers.. Guidelines should be produced and a resource packet prepared for use in various neighborhoods..."

"Librarian participants should be asked a year from now to write a report on activities, programs, etc., initiated after this conference, as a result of ideas proposed here...resource people whould evaluate their local libraries...cooperative efforts should be reported...SLICE should conduct similar workshops at the state and local levels, assist local librarians to organize interaction, and to write proposals to fund such undertakings..."

Many participants, in fact, cited workshops at the state and local levels, with local resource people, as an important aspect of follow up. Typical of such recommendations were the following:

"Follow-up: institute in the state with local resource people... establish training program for ethnic minorities, with plan for para professional positions to lead to professional...Evaluation criteria to aid people working in demonstration projects..."

"Each state should follow up this Institute by another at the state level. We can convey the conversations from this experience, but I don't believe we can report the feeling..."

State level workshop follow-ups were built into the plan for the Institute from the beginning, or more accurately, the hope that states would want to undertake such follow-ups. Several of the six states have already taken first steps, or planned for them.

In Louisiana, librarian participants presented their reactions and recommendations, shortly after the Institute, to administrators of regional system and large libraries. Arkansas and Arizona planned statewide workshops to be held in the Spring of 1973. The first of these,in March, conducted by the State Library Commission,was to provide participants in the Institute with a chance to share the essence of their Oklahoma experience with other Arkansas librarians. The other, in Arizona in April, was planned as a step in the develop ment of collaboration between librarians and the target groups, and

thus was organized by a task force made up of resource and librarian participants at the Institute. Community organizations of poor people were asked to help with planning, funding and conducting the workshop, so that it would become the occasion for opening avenues of communication. Texas participants, too, formed a workshop committee, and planned to present a program on the subject at the Spring library conference.

Funds were provided in the grant from USOE to document the Institute rather fully with recording and pictures. All of the states are eager to have the use of the multi-media kit that is being developed from these materials and other used at the Institute. Hearing the recommendations and views of participants in their own words and voices - especially those of some of the resource participants - is persuasive and will doubtless be helpful in leading off local discussion.

One of the most often recurring injunctions in the evaluations was expressed by the one which said: "somebody make sure that the states follow up on their plans and recommendations." These were the plans which the states developed in groups on the final afternoon of the Institute, and shared with the full group on the final morning. Those from the six states can be combined and distilled as follows:

1. Mount a series of training programs to educate for awareness of disadvantaged people and their needs library professional staffs, paraprofessionals, trustees; enlist members of the target clientele in doing this;

2. Active recruitment and in-service training of persons from poor, minority and culturally different groups for employment in library outreach programs;

3. Develop pilot and demonstration programs to meet full family needs of disadvantaged families, with emphasis on preschool children and helping parents to become equipped to help them at home;

4. Establish inter-agency collaboration on programs so that library services are integrated with those of existing community and family assistance programs;

5. Develop a clearinghouse of resources: human experience, and expertise, materials, success stories and failures, and set up a system of sharing and circulating the information;

6. Develop methods of evaluating programs so that people will have some yardsticks for judging success or failure.

Following the state presentations, which were written on the blackboard and discussed by the full group of participants, the Institute leaders identified possible regional interstate services that might assist the states and ALA's Office for Library Service to the Disdavantaged in achieving improved service nationwide. These were briefly:

1. Assist in inter-agency collaboration by identifying concerned agencies in each state and at the federal/regional level. This might extend to identification of funding sources of programs.

2. Identify useful training materials, human resources and on-going successful or ground-breaking programs as a "clearinghouse" function.

3. Package training materials for librarians, trustees, and other library workers; package information materials for social action and community agencies and organizations of disadvantaged people that they can use with their own members or clients, and staffs, relating library materials and services to the survival needs of the disadvantaged;

4. Identify, and if possible stimulate production of, special materials needed by types of disadvantaged people in the region and communicate availability;

5. Organize a traveling series of institutes on library service to the disadvantaged that could be used, in whole or in part, in each state.

Major strengths of the Institute, in addition to the already discussed involvement of articulate target group leaders,(some of whom illustrated for the librarians that leadership cannot be necessarily equated with education) included the joint consortium-type sponsorship; the articulated structure which took into account the fact of local, state, regional and national complementary responsibility; and the good mix of long-experienced(but not jaded)and young, ethusiastic and responsible librarians who were able to participate.

Weaknesses, in addition to those already mentioned, included: Mixed or uncertain expectations of what the Institute was to be, by

participants; poor audio and visual quality of some of the presentations; insufficient pre-planning of discussion group sessions, which, because of the effort to keep them unstructured and informal probably did not achieve as much conrete planning as we might have hoped. The days were probably too long for many participants, and we might have eliminated the career education segments, which did not add very much for most participants.

I think the goals were good ones. They were inter-related and hung together, and on the whole, I think they were achieved, in so far as one can judge that "strengthening" or "stimulation" has taken place. It would seem that the Institute has produced a greater degree of awareness, determination, and a sense of how to begin to tackle the problem of serving disadvantaged populations in the region. It might be interesting, another time, to include in a cluster of goals for such an Institute some time frame objectives which can be definitely met or not met.

I remain convinced after this Institute that short, intensive, institute experiences of not longer than a week's duration are the most practical and the most productive when participants are already well-qualified and experienced professionals seeking to sharpen their skills and work on long term improvements. The content of this institute, and the human relations involved were too rich for participants to have sustained interest and energy for any longer than they did. The dates were too late in the fall for some would-be applicants, but on the whole were good ones for this particular Institute. School year week days almost rule out school librarians.

The size of the group was just about perfect. It would have been desirable to have been sure of having at least one staff member from each of the state agencies involved. The ratio of staff to participants was just right, I feel, and the fact that some participants doubled as staff was an asset, I believe.

The budget was satisfactory and covered the needs. It was not sufficient to bring consultants from outside the region, but for the purposes of this Institute it was not necessary to do so. It is doubtful that the Institute will have any impact on the on-going academic year program.

IV. Conclusions

The hardest thing for librarians, even sophisticated ones with leadership experience and responsibility, to learn and accept is that people, generally, really do not understand what libraries are for and how librarians can serve their real life situations and survival needs. This is doubly, triply true of disadvantaged people. The librarians in our Institute became a little more sensitized to the nuances of the agency-client relationship, of speech and cultural pride; and to leadership patterns and organization among the disadvantaged. They listened, and they began to understand some of the things that they could do themselves to relate better, to interpret more accurately. Moreover, being leaders they felt the need for sharing the insights they had gained, and helping other librarians to make a start in the tremendous job of relating library services to people cut off from them largely because they have never known what to ask for.

I believe I can say on behalf of the formally constituted staff and all the participants who made up the informal staff as they learned from eachother, that the Institute accomplished its purposes; that we are all proud of it and feel a great responsibility to make sure that its spin-offs continue.

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FIRST, THE BASICS:

WHO ARE THE DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHWEST REGION?

WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

Prepared for: Institute on Strengthening Librarians' Capability to Elicit and Respond to the Felt Needs of Minority/ Culturally Isolated/Disadvantaged Persons and Groups in the Southwest. Norman, Oklahoma. Oct. 4-8, 1972.

Prepared by: Linda Ann Levy

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PREFACE

This paper provides a statistical profile of the people of the six states included in the Southwestern Library Association--background information prepared for participants in the Institute on Strengthening Librarians' Capability to Elicit and Respond to the Felt Needs of Minority/Culturally Isolated/Disadvantaged Persons and Groups in the Southwest, held at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oct. 4-8, 1972.

Co-sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) Advisory Committee on Library Service to the Disadvantaged (LSD), the University of Oklahoma School of Library Science, and Southwestern Library Interstate Cooperative Endeavor (SLICE), And the Outreach Book Committee
the institute was funded under Title II, Part B, Higher Education Act of 1965, Public Law 89-329, as amended.

Author of the paper is Linda Ann Levy, a former Peace Corps volunteer and a recent graduate of the University of Oklahoma's School of Library Science. Mrs. Levy received her undergraduate degree form Oklahoma State University in 1967, with a major in journalism and a minor in sociology. She has varied work experience, including time spent both as a factory assembly line worker and as a caseworker for The Oklahoma County Department of Welfare. She is currently employed as an assistant children's librarian with the Oklahoma County Libraries System.

WHO ARE THE DISADVANTAGED?

To develop a workable project of program for any particular group of people, one must go to those people and find out what they want and what they think. And to go to them, one must know who they are and where they are.

So, to offer pertinent, meaningful library service to persons in Arkansas, Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas who are now separated from such service by one barrier or another--be it great mental distance or great physical distance--libraries must know who these disadvantaged people are and where to find them.

Working from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's definition of the disadvantaged as the term applies to the Library Services and Construction Act of 1970, disadvantaged persons means "persons who have educational, socio-economic, cultural, or other disadvantages that prevent them from receiving the benefits of library services designed for persons without such disadvantages and who for that reason require specially designed library services."[1] HEW further defines the disadvantaged as "persons whose need for such special services results from poverty, neglect, delinquency or cultural or linguistic isolation from the community at large."[2]

These categories, translated into real people in the Southwest region,[3] become the urban and rural poor; the geographically disadvantaged; the unemployed and the under-employed; the aged and the very young; the functionally illiterate and the poorly educated; blacks, Indians; Spanish-Americans and other ethnic minorities. Perhaps of special interest to this institute will be those areas in which these categories overlap.

THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHWEST REGION NUMBERICALLY:

The people of the Southwest, numbering 22 million,[4] represent over one-tenth of the national population of 200 million. The populations of the six states included in the region vary from over 11 million people in Texas to just over 1

million people in New Mexico, with Arizona at 1 million eight hundred thousand, Arkansas at just under 2 million, Oklahoma at 2 and one-half million and Louisiana at just over 3 and one-half million.[5]

Louisiana, the region's smallest state in terms of square miles, has the greatest population per square mile. With 81 persons per square mile, Louisiana is the only state in our region to equal or surpass the national figure for average population per square mile--57.5.[6] Texas, which has over five times the physical area of Louisiana, has only half the population density, with 42.7 persons per square mile.[7] Oklahoma and Arkansas have almost identical population densitites, 37.2 and 37.0 persons respectively.[8] Arizona and New Mexico, with the second and third largest geographical areas in the region, have the fewest people per square mile. Arizona has a population density of 15.6 and New Mexico only 8.4.[9]

Arkansas has a larger rural population (in terms of <u>where</u> her people live) than any of the other five states in the region, and it's the only state in the region to divide its population equally, 50% rural and 50% urban,[10] according to the definition of urban and rural residence used in the 1970 U.S. Census.[11] Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona are all predominently urban, with Texas and Arizona having the highest degree of urbanization--both almost 80%.[12] The remaining three states, Oklahoma, Louisiana and New Mexico, all have close to a 70-30 ration, with 70% of their populations considered urban and 30% considered rural.[13]

Each of the six states has metopolitan areas where great percentages of its population are located. Especially in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas there are vast geographic areas, often sparsely settled. The majority of the population, as well as the chief library resources, is concentrated in a few urban areas.[14] One could draw a line from the Dallas-Fort Worth-Denton area through the Austin-San Antonio area and across to Houston and within that triangle hit 60-70% of the

Texas population.[15] Albuquerque, on the other hand, is the population center of New Mexico.[16] And Grace Stevenson states in her survey of Arizona that more than 70% of the population of that state is in the metropolitan area of Tucson and Phoenix.[17]

Such population concentration is also found in the other three states. The Little Rock metropolitan area contains one-third of Arkansas' population, New Orleans contains one-fourth of Louisiana's population and Oklahoma City and Tulsa combined contain about 45% of all the people in Oklahoma.[18]

New Mexico, along with having the most elbow room for her people, also has the youngest population in the Southwest region. The median age (that is, just as many persons younger and just as many persons older) for New Mexico is 23.9 years.[19] The population with the oldest median age in the region falls to Oklahoma with 29.4.[20] Arkansas has the next oldest population with a median age of 29.1, followed by Texas with 26.4, Arizona with 26.3 and Louisiana with 24.8.[21]

As far as numbers go, the states are growing. From April, 1960 to April, 1970, Arizona's population jumped a whopping 36%, compared to a 6.8% increase for New Mexico, a 7.7% gain for Arkansas, 9.9% for Oklahoma, 11.8% for Louisiana and 16.9% for Texas.[22]

Population projections from the U.S. Department of Commerce for the next 10-year period--from 1970 until 1980--call for a slight increase in these percentages for every state but Arizona, which the Department says will drop down to a 25.8% gain in population[23] lower than Arizona's increase for 1960-1970 but still far ahead of the other five states.

THE AGED AND THE VERY YOUNG:

Overall in our six state region, we have slightly fewer persons over age 65 than we do under 5. One out of every 11 persons is over 65, (8.8%),[24] while one out of every 10.6 persons is under 5 (9.4%).[25]

According to the 1970 White House Conference on Aging, 80% of the total population 65 and over is out of the labor force,[26] and over 2 million residents

of the Southwest region are 65 or over.[27]

In addition, the percentage of persons 65 and over with chronic health conditions or disabilities is much higher than for the general population nationally, increasing sharply at age 75 when almost 90% are disabled in some manner.[28]

So, the majority of our states' citizens age 65 years and older is out of the labor force, is disabled in some fashion and is much more likely to have incomes below poverty level than is the general populace. In Arkansas, 47.3% of persons 65 and over live at what the federal government considers below poverty level; in Louisiana, it's 43.3%; in Oklahoma, 38.4%; in New Mexico, 36.1%; in Texas 34.9%; and in Arizona, 24%.[29]

Compare these percentages with an overview of the percentages of our total population with below poverty level incomes in 1969 as reported in the 1970 census. The latter varies from a low of 15.3% in Arizona to highs of 27.8% in Arkansas and 26.3% in Louisiana.[30] Texas and Oklahoma tie with 18.8% of their total population living at below poverty level. New Mexico has 22.8% of its people below the poverty level.

If a person is black and over 65, the odds are even greater that he will be poor. In Arkansas, 60% of all blacks live at below poverty level, compared with 16% of all white persons in the state.[32] In Louisiana, 53% of all blacks are below poverty level, compared with just under 15% of the white population; in Oklahoma the figures become 45.5% for blacks and 16% for whites; in New Mexico, 42% for blacks, 20% for whites; in Texas, 38% for blacks 16% for whites; and in Arizona, 36% for blacks, 12% for whites.[33]

But race or color little affects a child's chance of going to nursery school in the region. Urban or rural residence is much more of a determining factor.

Of close to 2 million children under 5 in the region, 10.6% of the three- and four-year-olds are enrolled in some form of nursery school or preschool.[34] The most noticeable variation between states is between the regional high of

Arizona with 13.7% of its three and four-year-olds enrolled, and the regional low in Arkansas where 6.2% of the under-five population attends some form of nursery school.[35]

However, low as these figures are, a child's chance of going to some kind of pre-school is doubled merely by living in an urban area of the region rather than a rural one. Well over 12% of urban three and four-year-olds attend pre-school, whereas half that number, 6.2%, of three and four-year-olds living in rural areas of the region do so.[36]

So, whether a child is white or brown or black in our region, he or she has about the same chance of not going to nursery school. Almost 11% of black children are enrolled in pre-school or nursery, 10.5% of white children are enrolled and 10.3% of Spanish-American children are enrolled.[37] Some 90% of the Southwest region's pre-schoolers are not going to pre-school.

MINORITY GROUPS

Throughout the region as a whole, almost 14% of the population is black, and just over 13% of the population is Spanish-surnamed or speaks Spanish.[38] Thus, every seventh person in the six-state region is black and every eighth person is Spanish-American.

There are nearly 300,000 American Indians in the region, with the greatest number in Oklahoma, 97,731, and in Arizona, with 95,803.[39] Next comes New Mexico with almost 73,000; then Texas with 18,000 and Arkansas with just 2,000 Indians.[40]

The region has the largest proportion of Indian and Spanish-speaking residents in the nation, many of them do not speak English or use it as an unfamilar second language.[41]

Attempts to find comparable regional data on Indians (in regard to education, pre-school attendance, unemployment) were unsatisfactory. Librarians and those interested in such breakdowns would probably do well to contact their state regional

planning offices, their state Bureau of Indian Affairs and other local resources. The regional offices for the U.S. Office of Education and for the U.S. Department of Labor were unable to supply breakdowns within the Indian population.

However, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) has reported on the first phase of its library project,[52] funded by the Library and Technology Bureau of the United States Office of Education and intended to identify library-informational needs of Indian people and to establish three library demonstration sites. The report states that data already collected reflect Indian struggles with problems of discrimination, unemployment, poverty, economic development and personal and group identity.[43]

This data that libraries need to provide include information about opportunity for employment, vocational training, legal and civil rights, health and information about service agencies established to help Indian people. In addition, "the data clearly reflect the renewed interest in Indian history and culture."[44]

Other ethnic groups in the Southwest region are the people of French extraction in Louisiana and some 100,000 persons of German origin located primarily in South Central Texas.[45]

REGIONAL EDUCATION

In 1960 the median educational level[46] for the United States was 10.6 years.[47] At that time the educational level of three of the six Southwest states was below that figure.[48] In 1970 the median educational level for the U.S. was 12.5 years.[49] Every state in the region falls below that figure.[50]

Regionally, the median school years completed by persons age 25 and older stairsteps from Arizona's high of 12.3 school years to New Mexico's 12.2, Oklahoma's 12.1, Texas' 11.6, Louisiana's 10.8 and Arkansas' 10.5 years.[51]

Here again urban and rural residence are very real factors in educational opportunity, as was demonstrated by pre-school enrollment figures. Median school years completed by rural residents of the six states range from a half year to

over two years below the figure given for urban residents.[52] In terms of the amount of schooling people are likely to have, where a person lives makes, least in Arizona. Median school years for Arizona urban residents is 12.3 compared with 11.9 for rural residents.[53]

The percent of persons 25 years and older who have finished high school is also significant for librarians. Only 25-30% of the adults in the region have high school educations.

Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona have close to 30% of adults with a high school degree.[54] Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas come closer to having only 25% of their adults over 25 with diplomas.[55]

The percentage finishing the twelfth grade varies quite a bit between the white population and the non-white population in each state. The least difference between high school graduation percentages for white and non white populations is found in Texas, where almost 26% of the white population graduates from high school and almost 20% of the non-white population does.[56] Next comes Oklahoma with just over 30% of the white population high school graduates and almost 24% of the non-white population.[57] In New Mexico, almost 31% of the white population is graduated from high school and 21% of the non-white population.[58] In Arizona the figures become almost 33% of the white population and just over 18% of the non-white; in Louisiana, 30% of the white population and almost 13% of the non-white; in Arkansas, 28% of the white population finishes high school and 11% of the non-white.[59]

From 25% to 40% of the people in each of the six states are considered functional illiterates according to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's definition of such as "persons with eighth grade educations or less".[60] Arizona at 24.8%, has the lowest percentage of its population designated functionally illiterate, New Mexico is next with 27.6%, then Oklahoma with 29.6%, Texas with 30.3%, Louisiana with 38.5% and Arkansas with just over 40%.[61]

THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE UNDER-EMPLOYED

Not one of the six states has a per capita income equal to the national average--$3,910 per resident per year.[62] Arizona comes closest with a per capital income of $3,542, and Arkansas brings up the rear with $2,742.[63] But ranking the six Southwest states with the other 44 gives a clearer picture. Arizona ranks 29th--our high, followed by Texas, which ranks 30th; Oklahoma, 35th; Louisiana, 41st; New Mexico, 44th; and Arkansas, 49th.[64]

In 1970, when the most recent census was taken, unemployed persons age 16 and over and considered to be in the labor force represented 6.3% of New Mexico's population and a close 6.2% of Louisiana's. Texas had the lowest percentage for unemployment in the region with 3.6%. In the middle range fell Arizona with 4.1% of her labor force unemployed, Oklahoma with 4.3%, and Arkansas with 5.2%.

But due to economic fluctuations in the past two years, we went to the various state employment commissions for more recent data than the U.S. Department of Labor has. The facts obtained from the various agencies are not really comparable since the states' most recent unemployment percentages are not for the same time periods. As of April 1972, 4.8% of the total labor force in Oklahoma was unemployed. As of July, 1972, 5.7% of the labor force in Texas was unemployed, in Arkansas, 4.9%, 2.3% in Arizona, and 6.2% in New Mexico. In August, 1972, 6.6% of the labor force in Louisiana was unemployed.[66]

SUMMARY

You've just seen and heard the Southwest region on stage, boundary lines drawn and a bit of scenery added. We now have an idea of how many of our people are disadvantaged in one way or another---how many are young with no chance of going to pre-school, how many are old and poor, how many are unemployed, how many are functional illiterates and how few are actually educated to the level a high school diploma indicates. This is background; this is foundation. We go from here.

[1]Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, Rules and regulations LibraryService and Construction Act as amended (84 Stat. 1660, 20 U S.C.)

[2]Ibid.

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[4]U S. Bureau of the Census, Census Population: 1970. General Social and Economic Characteristics. Final Report. For Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas
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[8]Ibid.

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[28]Ibid.

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[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

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[38]U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census Population: 1970. General Social and Economic Characteristics. Final Report. For Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Table 48: General Characteristics by Race, for Urban and Rural Residence: 1970.

[39]Bureau of Indian Affairs, Dallas, Texas,

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Final Listing of Librarian Participants as of September 28, 1972

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